Tourism Partnership Boosts Tourist Spending By $78 Million

Tourism, Culture and Heritage

News Releases

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The Atlantic Canada Tourism Partnership (ACTP) announced today, March 26, that its efforts in 2003 succeeded in bringing more tourists from the United States, Europe and Japan to Atlantic Canada, generating $78 million in tourism revenue. This represents a return of $16.36 for every dollar invested in the ACTP's international marketing campaigns.

The strong results were identified in an evaluation of the ACTP's efforts in 2003, conducted by Tourism Synergy, an independent consultant. The ACTP brings together the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA), as well as the tourism departments and tourism industry associations of New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.

"The ACTP is a powerful example of the federal and provincial governments working together with industry to help grow tourism in Atlantic Canada," said Joseph McGuire, Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency. "The excellent results for 2003 mark another successful year for the ACTP despite many challenges to the tourism industry, such as the weak U.S. economy, concerns about SARS and the conflict in Iraq."

The ACTP undertakes detailed market research to focus its efforts on promoting Atlantic Canada in areas and market segments that offer the most benefit. "The ACTP is highly strategic in its marketing programs. That is one of the keys to its successful results and the important role it is playing in continuing to develop the tourism industry in the region," said Rodney MacDonald, Nova Scotia Minister of Tourism, Culture and Heritage. "The ACTP is an investment in our economy that is paying strong dividends."

The ACTP has two distinct international marketing programs that support and complement the tourism programs of each of the four Atlantic provinces. The first focuses on the United States, particularly New England and the mid-Atlantic states. The second focuses on the United Kingdom, German-speaking countries in Europe and Japan. The marketing programs include consumer advertising campaigns designed to attract visitors to Atlantic Canada, participation in trade and consumer travel trade shows, familiarization and media tours, editorial programs and tour wholesaler partnerships. In addition, dedicated consumer marketing websites for Japan and the United Kingdom and German-speaking countries were launched in 2003.

In the United States, conversion studies on toll-free inquiries

concluded that the ACTP generated $11.05 in tourism-related spending in Atlantic Canada for every dollar invested in consumer advertising. This rose to $19.98 when Internet inquiries were included in conversion estimates, far exceeding the partnership's 10 to one goal. These figures are even more impressive when the reduced number of U.S. visitors to Canada in 2003 due to a weak U.S. economy, SARS and the conflict in Iraq are considered.

The overseas marketing program is part of a longer-term strategy to draw more visitors from key developmental markets. While the bulk of the ACTP's resources are logically directed to the strong growth potential of the neighbouring New England states, the overseas marketing strategy also produced impressive results, generating $5.12 for every dollar invested in consumer advertising, exceeding its five to one goal.

"The ACTP activities assisted Atlantic Canada's tourism industry to successfully meet the challenges in 2003. We appreciate the added value of the partnership and the tangible results from the ACTP investment," said Nicholas Carson, president of the Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia.

The ACTP is a nine-member pan-Atlantic partnership consisting of ACOA, the four provincial tourism industry associations and the provincial departments responsible for tourism in New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. Since 1994, it has successfully mounted three consecutive projects, with the fourth project now underway. Funding for the 2003-06 initiative, valued at $19.95 million, is cost-shared by the partners, with 50 per cent contributed by ACOA, 30 per cent contributed by the four Atlantic provinces and 20 per cent contributed by the four tourism industry associations in Atlantic Canada.

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